

Abstract**A HELPDESK SYSTEM AND METHOD**

5 A remote central helpdesk for a plurality of POS appliances includes a
diagnostics engine which, on input of a reported problem, executes a series of
manual and automated queries in a sequence determined by a decision tree
and by the answers to the queries. The diagnostics engine displays the queries
on a display, and prompts the helpdesk operator to answer those queries which
10 require a manual input. Automatic queries are executed by the helpdesk
computer which interrogates the POS appliance for any necessary data. The
diagnostics engine makes the problem-solving visible to the helpdesk operator,
and helps the operator to understand their job and the possible reasons why
problems might occur.

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